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ABOUT A.C.T.

AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training in its conservatory, and an ongoing dialogue with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and Managing Director Heather Kitchen, A.C.T. embraces its responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvent its relationship to the rich theatrical traditions and literatures that are our collective legacy, while exploring new artistic forms and new communities. A commitment to the highest standards informs every aspect of A.C.T.'s creative work.

Founded in 1965 by William Ball, A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season at the Geary Theater in 1967. In the 1970s, A.C.T. solidified its national and international reputation, winning a Tony Award for outstanding theater performance and training in 1979. During the past three decades, more than 300 A.C.T. productions have been performed to a combined audience of seven million people; today, A.C.T.'s performance, education, and outreach programs annually reach more than 220,000 people in the San Francisco Bay

Area. In 1996, A.C.T.'s efforts to develop creative talent for the theater were recognized with the prestigious Jujameyn Theaters Award.

Since Perloff's appointment in 1992, A.C.T. has enjoyed continued success with groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations of contemporary playwriting. Guided by Perloff and Kitchen, A.C.T. has expanded its audience base and produced challenging theater in the rich context of symposia, audience discussions, and community interaction.

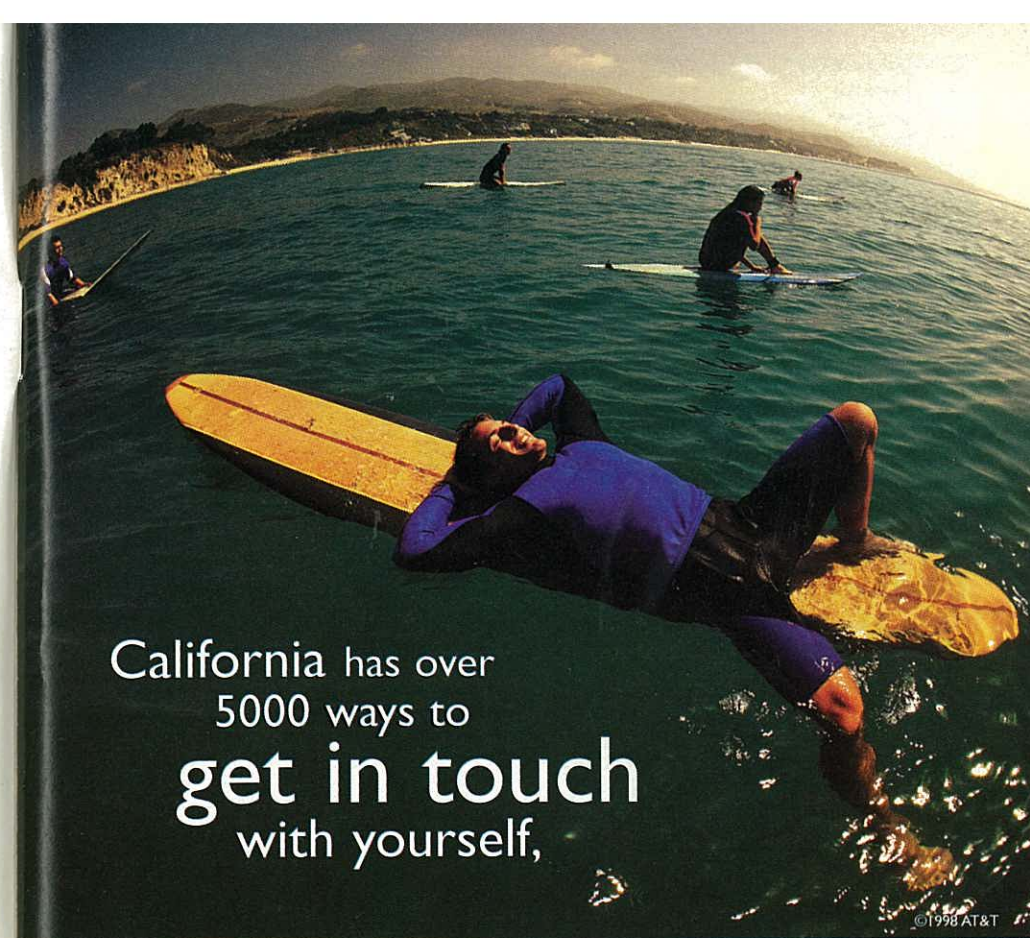
The conservatory, now serving 1,900 students every year, was the first training program not affiliated with a college or university accredited to award a master

of fine arts degree. Danny Glover, Annette Bening, Denzel Washington, and Winona Ryder are among the conservatory's distinguished former students. With the 1995 appointment of Melissa Smith as conservatory director, A.C.T. renewed its commitment to excellence in actor training and to the relationship between training, performance, and audience. The A.C.T. Advanced Training Program has moved to the forefront of America's actor training programs, while serving as the creative engine of the company at large. ■



A.C.T.'s beautifully restored Geary Theater, originally built in 1909, is one of the finest performance venues in the United States.

MARCO LORENZETTI © KORB & HEDRICH BELESSING



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THE 1998-99 A.C.T. SEASON

FOOL MOON

created by Bill Irwin and David Shiner
with the Red Clay Ramblers
September 3-October 4, 1998

HECUBA

by Euripides
translated and adapted by Timberlake Wertenbaker
directed by Carey Perloff
October 16-November 22, 1998

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

adapted from Charles Dickens's novella by Dennis Powers and Laird Williamson
directed by Candace Barrett and Raye Birk
November 28-December 27, 1998

SEX AND DEATH TO THE AGE 14

written and performed by Spalding Gray
December 29, 1998-January 4, 1999

JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK

by Sean O'Casey
directed by Giles Havergal
January 8-February 7, 1999

INDIAN INK

by Tom Stoppard
directed by Carey Perloff
February 18-March 21, 1999

LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT

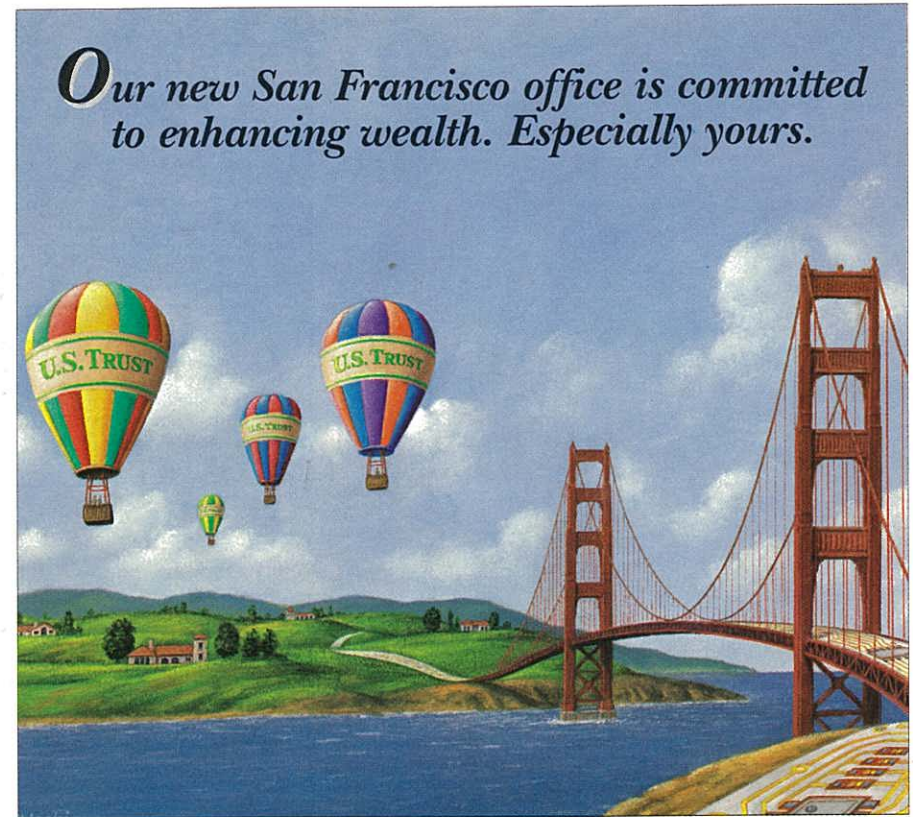
by Eugene O'Neill
directed by Laird Williamson
April 1-May 2, 1999

THE FIRST PICTURE SHOW

book and lyrics by Ain Gordon and David Gordon
music by Jeanine Tesori
directed by David Gordon
May 6-June 6, 1999

TARTUFFE

by Molière
directed by Charles Randolph-Wright
June 17-July 18, 1999



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ABOVE
(l to r) David Shiner and Bill Irwin

ON THE COVER
Photos by Joan Marcus; design by Cheshire Dave Beckerman

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A.C.T.

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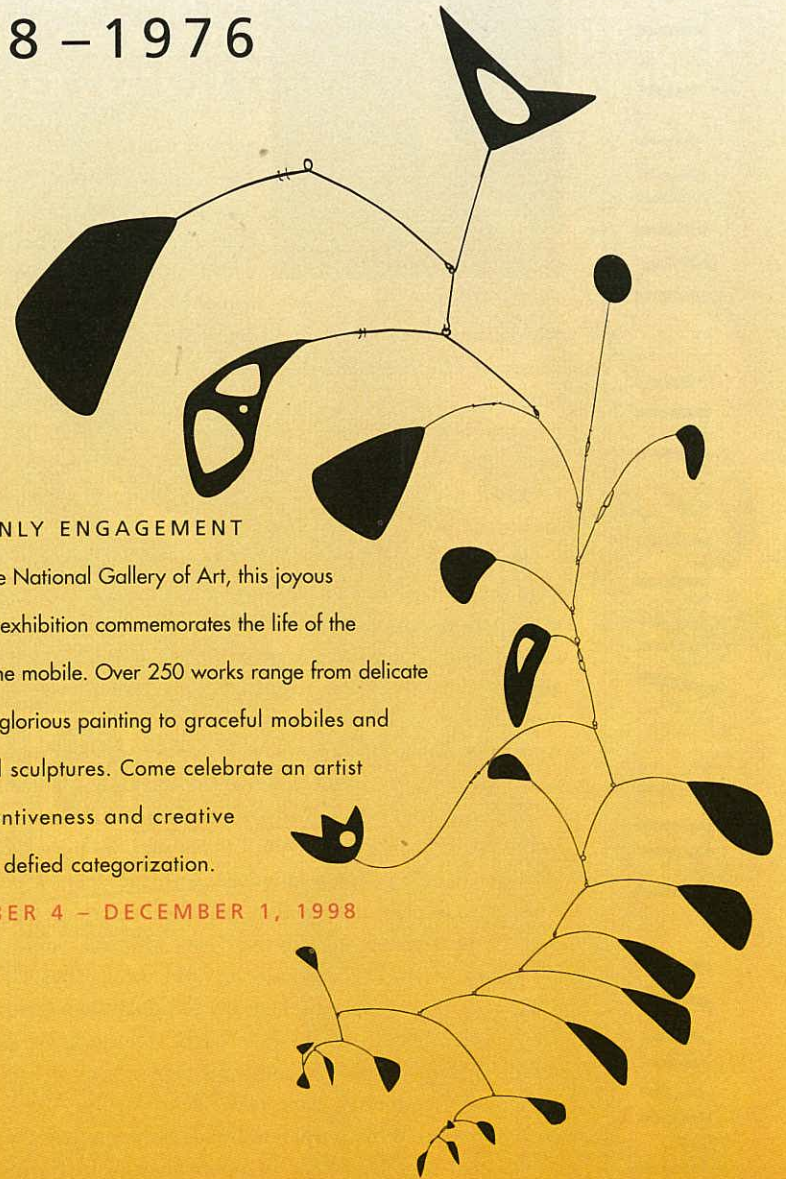
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FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

TERRENCE MCGRATH



Carey Perloff

Dear Friends,

Just before the last performance of Pinter's *Old Times* at the Geary Theater in July, clown extraordinaire Bill Irwin appeared in town to climb up the Geary boxes and balance on the arms of the seats and peer over the second balcony rail in preparation for *Fool Moon*. As one season yields to another, it seems wonderfully fitting that the mysterious hilarity of Pinter's world should give way to the wondrous physical comedy of Irwin and

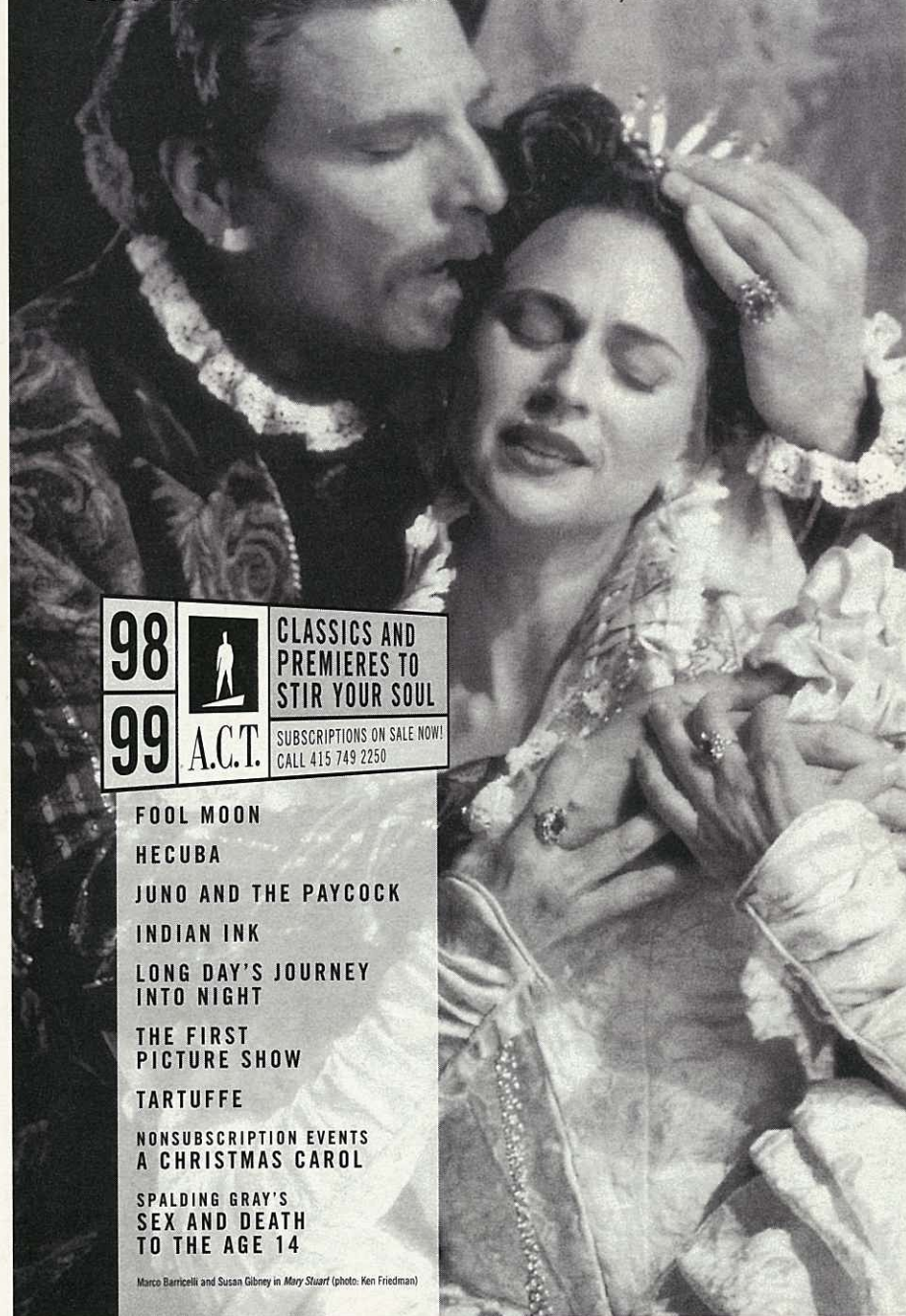
his partner in mayhem, David Shiner (accompanied by the infectious music of The Red Clay Ramblers). Irwin and Shiner use no spoken language, but the precision and clarity of their physical expression communicate volumes. *Fool Moon*, like *Old Times* before it, illuminates the astonishing possibilities of pure theatricality that are revealed when artists dare to transcend the boundaries of realism and make up their own rules.

Perhaps this is why theater continues to exert such a profound hold on us—it gives us room to exercise the muscles of our collective imaginations, freed from the constraints of “life as we know it.” In the breathtaking transformations of Irwin and Shiner's world, we as audience members are given a unique opportunity to enter into a new universe and to test it against what we know of our own world. And so we leave the theater with our senses heightened, our belief in the strangeness and wonder of the world momentarily fortified.

We hope that you will experience many such moments of magic in the upcoming season at A.C.T. As always, we have sought out plays with the richest possible language, with the deepest possibilities for complex and passionate acting, plays whose energy and power burst past the proscenium and fill the Geary with life. Some of these plays are major classics reimagined in vivid ways: Giles Havergal's production of Sean O'Casey's heartbreaking and vaudevillian *Juno and the Paycock*, Charles Randolph-Wright's new take on Molière's subversive *Tartuffe*, Laird Williamson's exploration of Eugene O'Neill's incendiary family saga *Long Day's Journey into Night*, and my own reexamination of the desperate bonds between a mother and daughter trapped in a landscape of political exile in Euripides' *Hecuba*. Complementing these great works from the past are remarkable new works: the delightful presentation of *Fool Moon* you see tonight, the American premiere of Tom Stoppard's poetic and romantic *Indian Ink*, and the world premiere of *The First Picture Show*, a new play by David Gordon and Ain Gordon, with music by Jeanine Tesori, about the wild early days of the silent film industry and the forgotten women who populated it.

continued on page 12

WELCOME TO THE A.C.T. 1998–99 SEASON!
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- TARTUFFE
- NONSUBSCRIPTION EVENTS
- A CHRISTMAS CAROL
- SPALDING GRAY'S SEX AND DEATH TO THE AGE 14

Marco Barricelli and Susan Gibney in *Mary Stuart* (photo: Ken Friedman)

continued from page 10

As *Fool Moon* opens in September, we will also introduce 24 of the most talented young actors in America to A.C.T.'s renowned Advanced Training Program (ATP), our graduate school in acting. We hope you are aware of the remarkable strides Conservatory Director Melissa Smith has made in making A.C.T.'s training program one of the top ten in America (as recently rated by *U.S. News & World Report*). The big news on the conservatory front is that the ATP has now expanded from a two- to a three-year program, with the third year focusing on public performances all over town. We know that some of you caught our students in the sold-out Pinter one-acts last June at New Langton Arts, and invite you to experience the inspired artistry of the five M.F.A. candidates who appear in Nicky Silver's *Raised in Captivity* at the Magic Theatre in October. We hope that you share our immense pride in all of our graduates as they fan out across the country working on stage and in film and television.

As always, many thanks for your lively support. I so look forward to seeing you at the Geary this season. Enjoy the show!

Yours,

Carey Perloff



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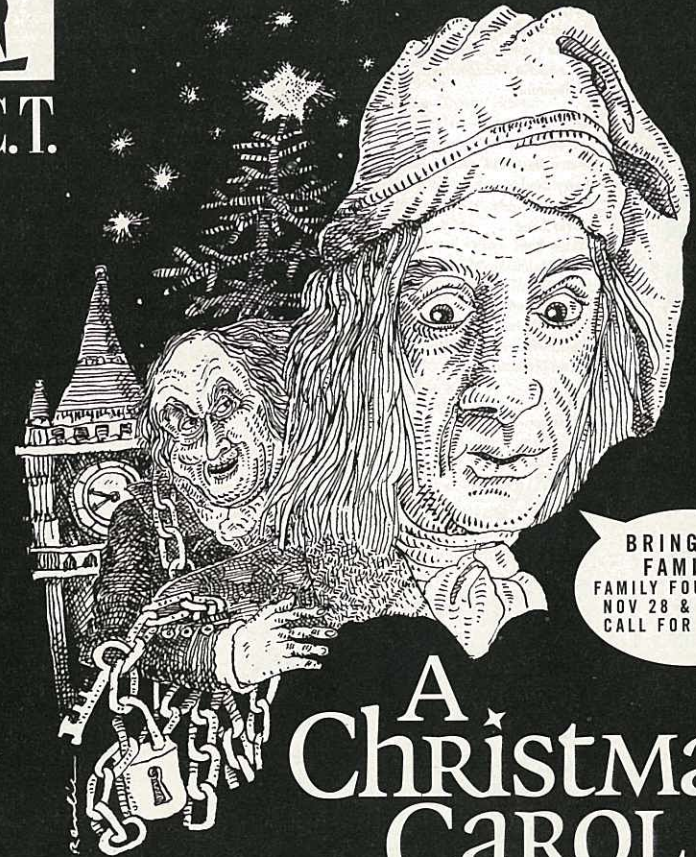
The Geary Theater's Sky Lobby (photo by Paula Gloistein)

Shona Tucker in *Insurrection: Holding History* (photo by Ken Friedman)



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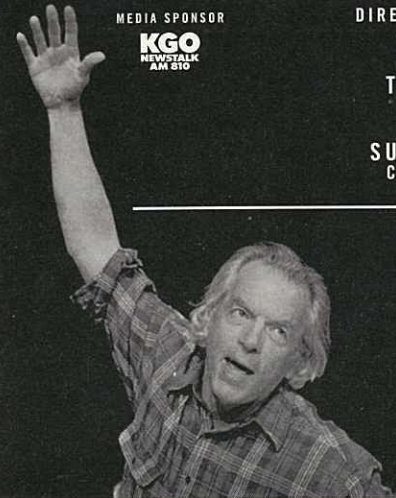


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Charles Randolph-Wright
Albert Takazaukas

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David Shiner

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David Gordon
Giles Havergal
Carey Perloff
Charles Randolph-Wright
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Bill Irwin David Shiner
in
**fool
moon**

with

The Red Clay Ramblers

Created by

Bill Irwin and David Shiner

Scenery by Douglas Stein
Costumes by Bill Kellard
Lighting by Nancy Schertler
Sound by Tom Morse
Resident Sound Designer Garth Hemphill
Flying Effects Designer Flying by Foy
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Originally produced on Broadway by
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Heather Kitchen
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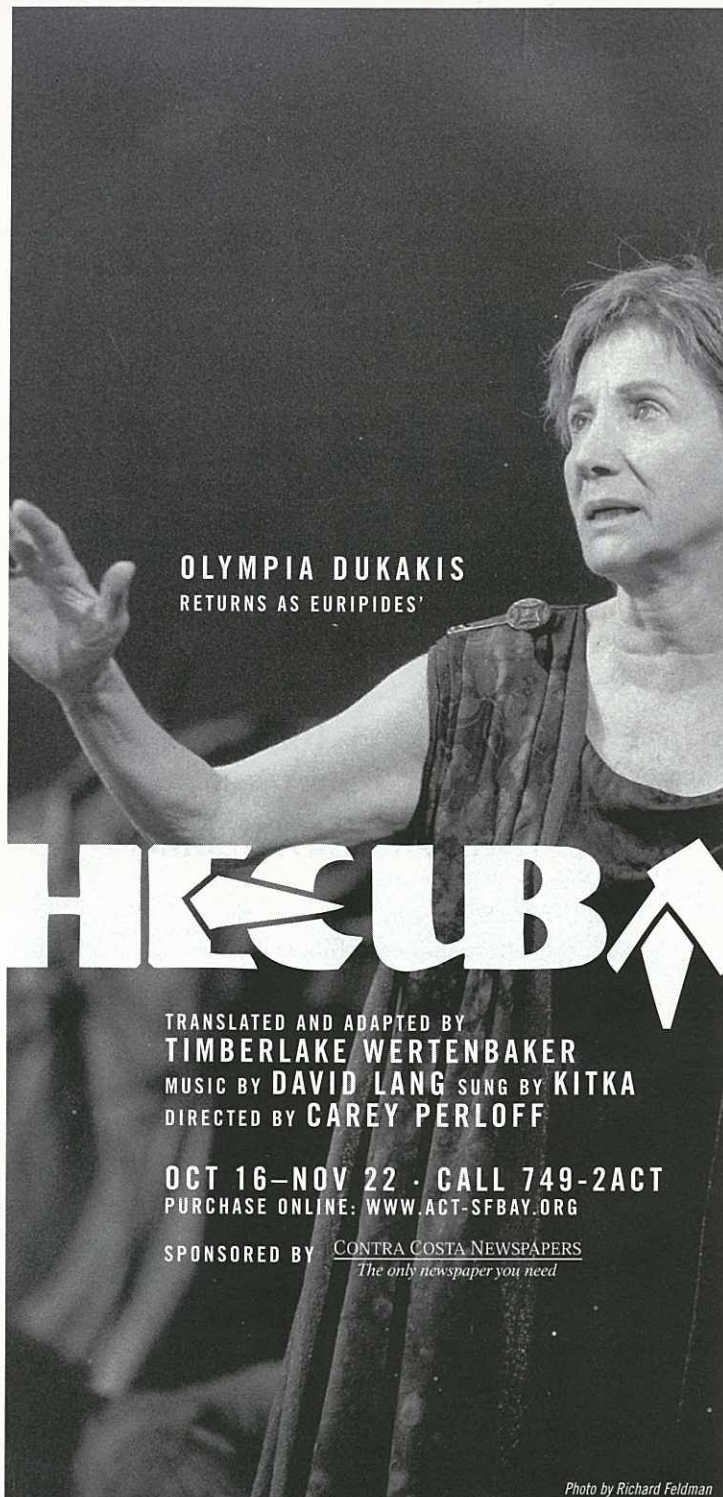
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fool moon

Cast
(in order of appearance)

David Shiner

Bill Irwin

The Red Clay Ramblers

Clay Buckner—*fiddle*

Chris Frank—*piano, accordion, trombone, ukulele*

Jack Herrick—*bass, trumpet, mellophone, banjolin, tin whistle*

Mark Roberts—*banjo, flute, oboe, tin whistle, keyboard*

Rob Ladd—*drums, ukulele*

There will be one intermission.

Additional Credits

Eli Valsing, *Assistant Stage Manager*

Christy Close, *Production Assistant*

Steve Shelley, *Lighting Design Associate*

David Hale, *Flying Director*

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A.C.T. PRESENTS

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GUARDIAN



PARTNERS IN MIME

by Jessica Werner

Foolery, sir, does walk about the orb like the sun; it shines everywhere.

—*Twelfth Night*

The pantheon of comic partnerships—which includes Laurel and Hardy, Abbott and Costello, and Burns and Allen—has had to make room for another couple of comedy masters, Bill Irwin and David Shiner. Experimental theatrical innovators as well as popular entertainers, Irwin and Shiner wreak havoc with traditional definitions of theater, honoring the silent-comedy traditions of the past while putting their own ironic spin on the future of comedy performance.

Shiner and Irwin share a nostalgic reverence for slapstick and the vaudevillian arts and exemplify the clown's ability to triumph over stage dilemmas great and small that mirror our own human aspirations and shared imperfections. By breaking down the barrier between themselves as performers and the audience as spectators, they demystify their own outrageous skill, as if to suggest that their small victories are achievable by all of us, if only we could suspend reality long enough to join in the fun.

NO FINER FOOLS

Irwin has been variously described by critics as “America’s clown prince,” “this generation’s most purely physical comic,” and “a clown by whom future clowning will be benchmarked.” His diverse performing background is reflected in the amalgam of styles and references at play in his work, which simultaneously pokes fun at the conventions of traditional theater while triggering a cultural memory of clowns from the golden era of American vaudeville.

Irwin acquired a lifelong love for making people laugh with physical comedy as a child, avidly watching his earliest role models—Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and Danny Kaye—on television. “I remember early television having lots of physical language, much more than it does now,” says Irwin. “The language of the body was primary—in my memory, at least—and it really attracted me.” In the early 1970s he immersed himself in avant-garde theater as a member of Herbert Blau’s experimental KRAKEN ensemble, and developed his wondrous soft-shoe dance skills with San Francisco’s Oberlin Dance Company (ODC). Torn between the refined art of the stage and the libertarian spirit of the circus, Irwin took to San Francisco’s streets, entertaining sidewalk audiences



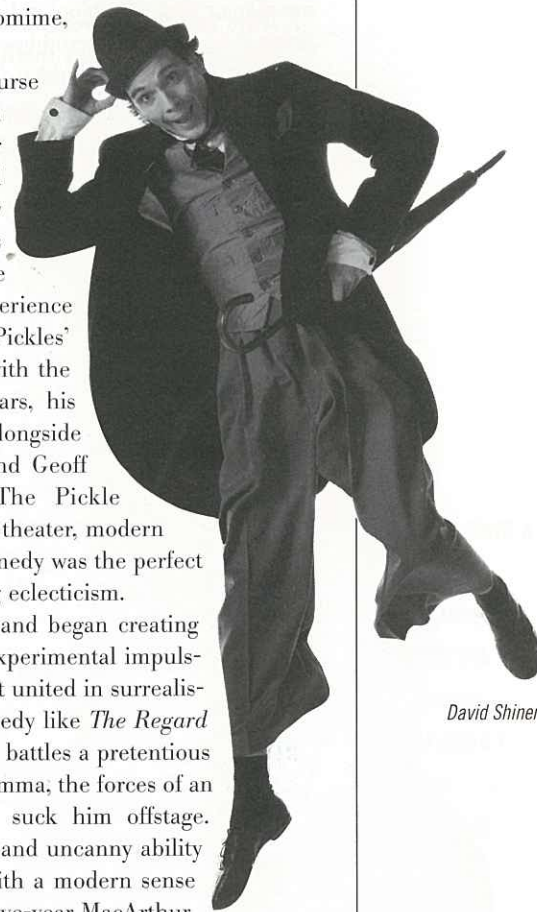
Bill Irwin

around town with fire eating, pantomime, and comedy monologues.

In 1974, after an eight-week course with the Ringling Brothers Clown College, Irwin answered an ad for performers in a local newspaper and found himself at the door of Larry Pisoni and Peggy Snider, cofounders of San Francisco’s celebrated Pickle Family Circus. Short on circus experience but long on talent, Irwin became the Pickles’ first white-faced clown and toured with the one-ring show for the next five years, his Willy the Clown fooling around alongside Pisoni’s alter ego Lorenzo Pickle and Geoff Hoyle’s mischievous Mr. Sniff. The Pickle Family’s chaotic blend of vaudeville, theater, modern dance, and silent-screen slapstick comedy was the perfect environment for Irwin’s own budding eclecticism.

When he left the circus in 1979 and began creating original work for the stage, Irwin’s experimental impulses and love for popular entertainment united in surrealist pieces of physical and verbal comedy like *The Regard of Flight*, in which his graceful clown battles a pretentious critic and, in his signature comic dilemma, the forces of an invisible vacuum that threatens to suck him offstage. Critics lauded Irwin’s physical grace and uncanny ability to perform old-fashioned routines with a modern sense of irony. In 1984 he was awarded a five-year MacArthur “genius grant,” the first to go to a performing artist.

Boston-born Shiner meanwhile honed his comedy skills as a street performer in cities throughout Europe during the 1980s, climbing over cars and people and stirring up general mayhem among his gathered crowds. A German resident for the last 15 years, Shiner has perfected his art in the tradition of Europe’s famed clowns, in prestigious festivals and national circuses in France, Germany, and Switzerland. After a successful tour of his original two-man show with partner Rene Bazinet, Shiner joined the Canadian Cirque du Soleil as their featured performer in 1990 and toured for a year and a half with the New Age circus spectacle. His old-school slapstick methods were highlighted against the blaring background of Cirque du Soleil’s sophisticated juxtaposition of music, high-tech imagery, and dreamlike narratives. Shiner’s love of audience interaction was given free rein in sketches like the one that remains central to *Fool Moon*: as a domineering silent-film director, he casts four people from the audience and orchestrates their involvement in a five-minute tale of love, betrayal, and revenge.



David Shiner

A SINGLE ACT OF
PHYSICAL
VIRTUOSITY CAN
AFFIRM OUR
INDIVIDUAL
POTENTIAL TO
SOAR IN
UNIMAGINED
WAYS.

Irwin and Shiner were already mutual admirers when serendipity threw them together for the first time on the set of Sam Shepard's 1992 film *Silent Tongue*. "It was a real blessing to be cast together," remembers Irwin. "We were on location, in the middle of nowhere in New Mexico, on a dusty medicine-show stage. The Red Clay Ramblers would play, and David and I would improvise. Shepard told us to start fooling around. They gave us two minutes, and we did nine."

The comics immediately discovered their natural affinities for each other's distinct clown personalities. Shiner's quick-witted humor and more aggressively urban style proved the perfect foil for Irwin's more benign clown, the hapless everyman for whom life is a constant struggle against forces, including gravity, that threaten to limit his freedom. "Working with Bill was so fluid," says Shiner. "With other clowns it never clicked that quickly." When Shiner was asked, during the shooting of *Silent Tongue*, to participate in Lincoln Center's Serious Fun! festival, he agreed and brought his new cohorts in comedy with him. They crafted their improvisations into a full-length production—a fusion of tried-and-true tricks from their individual repertoires and newly imagined routines—and *Fool Moon* was born. Their reunion at A.C.T. follows sold-out Broadway runs in 1993 and 1995 and tours to Los Angeles, Vienna, and Munich.

THE AUDIENCE GETS IN THE ACT

The spontaneous spirit of audience participation that invigorates *Fool Moon* has always been central to Shiner and Irwin's individual work, and it is one of the secrets to the show's success—bringing audience members into the act keeps every performance unpredictable, and therefore unique, and taps, as all successful clowning does, theatergoers' desire to escape from everyday reality into the world of fantasy they see onstage. Clowning has always recognized people's need to puncture the reverence surrounding life's formalities and to join in the merrymaking, and Irwin's attraction to the work of Bertolt Brecht (he performed *A Man's a Man* at the La Jolla Playhouse in 1985) and his earlier work with KRAKEN are rooted in a desire to make a direct and meaningful connection with the audience. Yet it is Shiner, says Irwin, who "has a sort of mystical ability" to choose audience members who become real partners in the comedy onstage, often confounding critics and other audience members who can't believe Shiner's picks aren't plants.

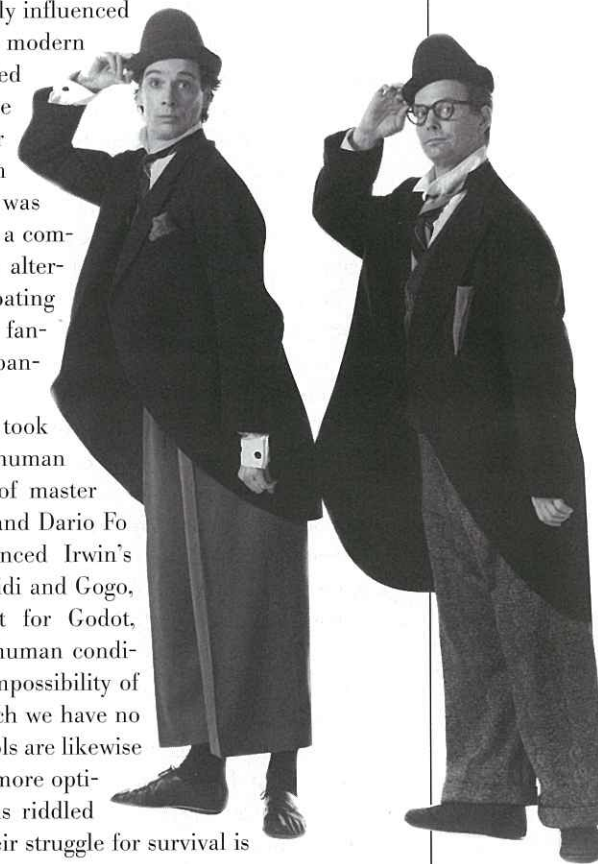
Shiner believes this uncanny ability to select the right people out of an audience of strangers was learned very early in life. "When there are a lot of unspoken things happening within a family, a child starts to develop a very sensitive awareness to the unspoken dialogue between people. I didn't even know that was what I was doing, and then it appeared spontaneously in my work. I realized I can read people very quickly.

"When I go out into the audience, I'm looking at how people are sitting, how they are talking to their neighbors, how they are dressed, all of which tells me more or less what kind of person they are in general terms. Once they come onstage, and I shake their hands, look into their eyes, and feel their energy, all kinds of information emerges to which I have become sensitive over the last 20 years. The more an artist studies himself, the more aware he or she becomes of the psychology of other people."

A TIMELESS ART

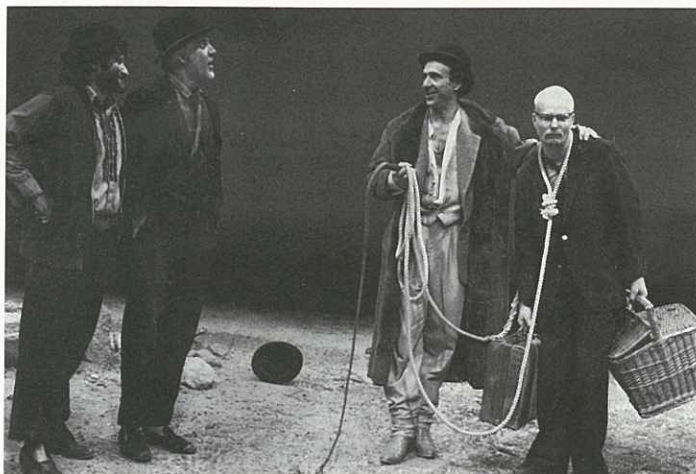
The art of the clown has been central to the theatrical experience since audiences first laughed together. Clownish figures appear in the rituals and mythologies of early cultures worldwide, and pantomime is known to have existed in ancient China, Persia, and Egypt. Clowns also figured prominently in the farces of ancient Greece and Rome as foils to more serious characters, their actions often explained by accompanying songs. The acrobatic harlequin and other familiar clown characters grew out of the parodies, pantomimes, and burlesque routines of 16th-century Italy's *commedia dell'arte* tradition, which deeply influenced Shakespeare and Molière. The modern clown, with fanciful, exaggerated costumes and gestures—the model for work like Shiner and Irwin's—developed in 18th-century Europe and was exemplified by Joey Grimaldi, a comically self-serving clown who alternated between arrogant gloating and cringing cowardice in his fantastically popular London pantomime routines.

Twentieth-century foolery took on a more global critique of human affairs in the postwar work of master satirists like Samuel Beckett and Dario Fo (both of whom have influenced Irwin's work). Beckett's archetypal Didi and Gogo, the tramp clowns who wait for Godot, express the absurdity of the human condition by commenting on the impossibility of existence in a world over which we have no control. Irwin and Shiner's fools are likewise caught in a world that, while more optimistic than Beckett's, remains riddled with potential pitfalls, and their struggle for survival is refreshingly transcendent.



Photos on pages 20,
21, and 23 by Joan
Marcus

(l to r) Robin Williams,
Steve Martin,
F. Murray Abraham,
and Bill Irwin in the
1988 Lincoln Center
production of
Waiting for Godot



BRIGITTE LACOMBE

The thrill of watching a stage performer overcome the ordinary limits of realism has continued to generate an exhilaration that other media rarely evoke. Clowns confront obstacles and dilemmas with which we can all relate; the simple act of falling down and getting up is a perfect metaphor for our own vulnerability and daily battles with imposed limitations. Especially in today's high-tech society, a single act of physical virtuosity can affirm our individual potential to soar in unimagined ways without the aid of machines, or—as Shiner and Irwin remind us—even without spoken language.

Both men are fluent in the universal language of physical comedy, which at its best transcends generational and cultural boundaries, as Shiner knows from his work in Europe, where language barriers are dissolved by the humane truth of his silent physical antics. Although the first version of *Fool Moon* incorporated some dialogue, both comics soon realized that words were superfluous. "After the first preview on Broadway we took out the dialogue, and we haven't spoken a word since," Irwin explains.

"For this particular show, dialogue just didn't work," adds Shiner. "It killed the magic of the show because the characters were already funny without saying anything. There was no reason to talk. Silent, physical comedy is actually the hardest comedy you can do, but the laughter somehow feels deeper."

"*Fool Moon* is actually full of language," Irwin points out, "but it's the language of the body, which in many ways is older—and, some people say, richer and more powerful—than spoken language. Spoken language, after all, is actually the second language we learn, and our first language is the language of the body. It often gets lost as we grow to depend on words."

The comedy in *Fool Moon* continues the tradition of master vaudevillians by exuberantly expressing the universality of the human condition—the ways in which we are all bound together by

continued on page 40

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*A complete list of current corporate supporters appears on page 52.

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Do you enjoy working with diverse people and learning more about the theater? The Friends of A.C.T., the company's volunteer auxiliary, offers many opportunities for people interested in contributing their time and talent to A.C.T. Volunteers assist with mailings and work with administrative departments, help at selected performances, staff the library, and more.

Friends do so much for A.C.T. throughout the year that we can never thank our volunteers enough for the critical support they provide. We would like to recognize the Friends listed below who have volunteered during recent months:

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Come to A.C.T. for the most entertaining education in town. A.C.T. offers several ways for you to learn about the season's productions and to express your views on the issues they raise:

A.C.T. PROLOGUES

Sponsored by the Junior League of San Francisco, these lively one-hour presentations are conducted by each show's director. Prologues are held before the Tuesday preview of every production, at 5:30 p.m., in the Geary Theater. Doors open at 5 p.m.

AUDIENCE EXCHANGES

These informal, anything-goes sessions are a great way to share your feelings and reactions with fellow theatergoers. Audience Exchanges take place in the Geary Theater for 30 minutes immediately after selected performances and are moderated by A.C.T. staff members and artists.

A.C.T. PERSPECTIVES

This popular series of free public symposia is back in 1998-99 from 7 to 9 p.m. on selected Monday evenings in the Geary Theater. Each symposium features a panel of scholars, theater artists, and professionals exploring topics ranging from aspects of the season's productions to the intersection of theater and the arts with American culture. Everyone is welcome—you need not have seen the play to attend.

WORDS ON PLAYS

Each entertaining and informative audience handbook contains advance program notes, a synopsis of the play, and additional background information about the playwright and the social and historical context of the work. A subscription for seven handbooks is available by mail to full-season subscribers for \$42 (\$21 for opening night subscribers); limited copies of handbooks for individual plays are also available for purchase at the Geary Theater Box Office, located at 405 Geary Street at Mason, and at the merchandise stand in the main lobby of the Geary Theater, for \$8 each.

ON FOOL MOON

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Mark O'Connor, <i>violin</i>	12/5
Mark Morris Dance Group <i>The Hard Nut</i>	12/12-20
Renée Fleming, <i>soprano</i>	1/9
Itzhak Perlman, <i>violin</i>	1/24
Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo	1/29-30
Ballet Nacional de Cuba	2/12-14
Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater	2/19-28
Peter Sellars & Tan Dun's <i>Peony Pavilion</i>	3/5-7
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BAY GUARDIAN

The *San Francisco Bay Guardian* made its A.C.T. sponsorship debut last season with *Old Times*. In the fall of 1966, a crusading new publication, the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, took center stage in San Francisco at one of the most dramatic times in this country's history. The *Guardian* was one of the first locally owned and operated independent news weeklies of its kind in the nation—and is still recognized as one of the best. Over the past 32 years, the *Guardian* has been dedicated to “printing the news and raising hell,” and has grown up with two generations of loyal readers who live, work, and play around San Francisco Bay. Among the award-winning paper's proudest achievements is its support of the arts, especially of those writers, painters, poets, players, and performers who help make up the soul of The City.

From in-depth news and reviews to the *Guardian* Outstanding Local Discovery Awards (the Goldies), to sponsoring contests for poetry, photography, and cartooning, the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* has always nurtured the best, most original artistic output the Bay Area has to offer. Beyond the printed page, the *Guardian*'s dialogue on Bay Area arts and artists continues at sfbg.com, expanding this creative spirit to touch a global community.

PACIFIC RESTAURANT

PACIFIC Restaurant and The Pan Pacific Hotel continue their long tradition of A.C.T. support by cosponsoring *Fool Moon*, their 11th sponsorship of an A.C.T. production.

Located in The Pan Pacific Hotel at the corner of Post and Mason Streets, a convenient one-block stroll from the Geary Theater, PACIFIC Restaurant was described by the 1997 *Zagat Survey* as “one of the classiest venues in town...outstanding in every way” and was honored by *Wine Spectator* for having one of the most distinguished wine lists in the nation.

Recently applauded by critics from the *San Francisco Examiner* and *Contra Costa Times*, PACIFIC's seasonal menus continue to earn high marks for chef Michael Otsuka's enticing entrees, such as rack of lamb with Arabic flavors, pan-roasted foie gras with Granny Smith apples, and crispy snapper filet with garlic chive mashed potatoes. After dinner patrons can indulge in a dessert prepared by pastry chef Otto Eckstein or sip a Pacific Flair coffee beside one of the fireside lounges while listening to live piano entertainment. Complimentary parking is available during lunch and dinner.

All A.C.T. audience members can savor PACIFIC Restaurant's exquisite prix fixe, three-course dinners. For reservations call (415) 929-2087.



CAREY PERLOFF (*Artistic Director*) assumed artistic leadership of A.C.T. in June 1992. Perloff has since led the company to unprecedented success, including the receipt of the prestigious 1996 Jujamcyn Theaters Award and the triumphant reopening of the Geary Theater following its \$27.5 million restoration. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff's work at A.C.T. includes last season's highly acclaimed productions of Friedrich Schiller's *Mary Stuart* and Harold Pinter's *Old Times*; Timberlake Wertenbaker's new version of Euripides' *Hecuba* with Olympia Dukakis; Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*; Tennessee Williams's *Rose Tattoo* with Kathleen Widdoes; Sophocles' *Antigone*; August Strindberg's *Creditors*; Paul Schmidt's new translation of Anton Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*; David Storey's *Home*; the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian's *Singer's Boy*; and the Geary Theater inaugural production of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, which featured David Strathairn and the Kronos Quartet. In 1993, Perloff directed the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Korot's opera *The Cave* at the Vienna Festival and the Brooklyn Academy of Music. She recently staged Christoph Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* for the San Francisco Opera Center.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of CSC Repertory (the Classic Stage Company) in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Ezra Pound's *Elektra* with Pamela Reed and Nancy Marchand; the American premiere of Pinter's *Mountain Language* and *The Birthday Party* with Jean Stapleton, Strathairn, and Peter Riegert; Bertolt Brecht's *Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* with John Turturro and Katherine Borowitz; and many other classic works. Under Perloff's leadership, CSC won the 1988 Obie Award for artistic excellence, as well as numerous Obies for acting, design, and direction.

Perloff received a B.A. (Phi Beta Kappa) in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford University. She was on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years and currently teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program.

This season Perloff directs *Hecuba* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival and at A.C.T., and the American premiere of Stoppard's *Indian Ink* at A.C.T.



HEATHER KITCHEN (*Managing Director*) joined A.C.T. as managing director in November 1996. She has extensive experience in theater management and production, has served as a strategic planning consultant for arts and educational institutions, and has taught for more than 20 years throughout Canada. Most recently she served as general manager of the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, Alberta, where she was responsible for a five-theater complex which produced up to 16 productions annually.

Prior to her work at the Citadel, she was production manager at Theatre New Brunswick for three years. Her stage management experience includes the Stratford Festival, the Canadian Stage Company in Toronto, the Canadian Opera Company, and the New Play Centre of Vancouver. She was also company manager for the Stratford Festival while on tour. Kitchen received an honors degree in drama and theater arts from the University of Waterloo and earned her M.B.A. from the Richard Ivey School of Business at The University of Western Ontario.

MELISSA SMITH (*Conservatory Director*), the master acting teacher of the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program, has taught acting to students of all ages throughout the United States. Before assuming leadership of the A.C.T. Conservatory in 1995, she was director of the program in theater and

dance at Princeton University, where she taught acting, scene study, and Shakespeare for six years. Also a professional actor, she has performed in regional theaters and in numerous off-off Broadway plays. Smith holds a B.A. in English and theater from Yale College and an M.F.A. in acting from the Yale School of Drama.

JAMES HAIRE (*Producing Director*) began his career on Broadway with Eva Le Gallienne's National Repertory Theater. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of *And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little* and *Georgy* (a musical by Carole Bayer Sager), as well as the national tour of Woody Allen's *Don't Drink the Water*. Off Broadway he produced Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* (directed by Marshall W. Mason) and Shaw's *Arms and the Man*. Haire joined A.C.T. in 1971. He and his department were awarded Theater Crafts International's award for excellence in the theater in 1989, and in 1992 Haire was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle.

CRAIG SLAIGHT (*Young Conservatory Director*) spent ten years in Los Angeles directing theater and television before joining A.C.T. in 1988. An award-winning educator, Slaight is a consultant to the Educational Theater Association and the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts and is a frequent speaker and adjudicator throughout the country. He has published ten anthologies for young actors, three of which were selected by the New York Public Library as "outstanding books for the teenager." In 1989, he founded the Young Conservatory's New Plays Program; 11 new works by professional playwrights have been developed, nine of which have been published by Smith & Kraus in *New Plays from A.C.T.'s Young Conservatory*. In January 1998 Carey Perloff awarded Slaight the first Artistic Director's Award for his contributions to A.C.T.

BRUCE WILLIAMS (*Director of Summer Training Congress & Community Programs*) has had a 23-year working relationship with A.C.T., where he has taught in the Advanced Training Program (ATP), Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T. (which he also administrates), directed numerous ATP studio productions, and acted in more than 40 mainstage productions. He has also performed on numerous other West Coast stages and has worked extensively in film, television, and voice-over.

PAUL WALSH (*Dramaturg & Director of Humanities*) has extensive experience as a dramaturg, translator, and adaptor, including many years collaborating with the Minneapolis-based Theatre de la Jeune Lune on such projects as *Children of Paradise*, *Germinal*, *Don Juan Giovanni*, and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. His translation of Strindberg's *Creditors* was directed by Carey Perloff at CSC in New York in 1991 and at A.C.T. in 1992. Walsh received a Ph.D. in drama from the University of Toronto and taught theater history and dramatic literature at Southern Methodist University. His critical writings appear in *The Production Notebooks*, *Re-interpreting Brecht*, *Strindberg's Dramaturgy*, *Theater Symposium*, and *Essays in Theater*.

MERYL LIND SHAW (*Casting Director*) joined the A.C.T. artistic staff in 1993. During the previous 17 years, she stage-managed more than 60 productions throughout the Bay Area, including A.C.T.'s *Bon Appétit!* and *Creditors*. She was resident stage manager at Berkeley Repertory Theatre for 12 years and production stage manager at the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival for three seasons. She was active with Actors' Equity Association for many years and served on the AEA negotiating committee in 1992 and 1993. Other casting projects include the San Francisco production of *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* and the CD-ROM game *Obsidian*.



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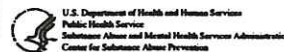
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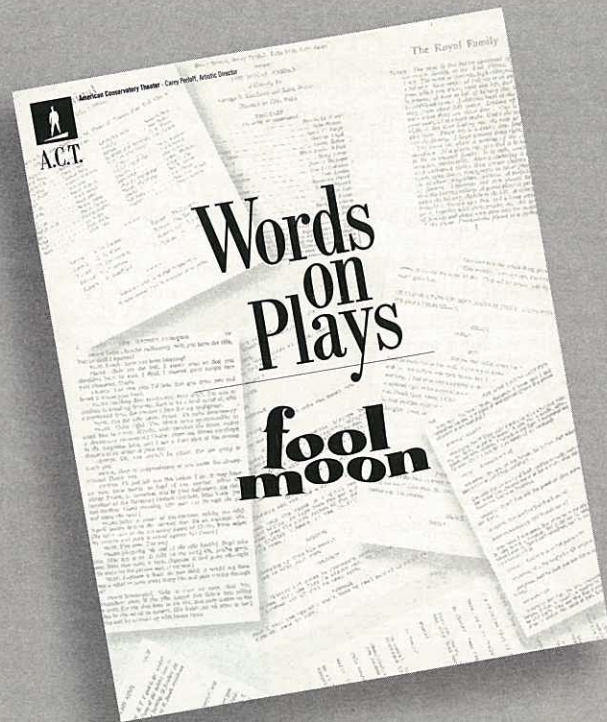
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BILL IRWIN was an original member of KRAKEN, a theater company directed by Herbert Blau, and spent five years as an original member of San Francisco's Pickle Family Circus. He has also appeared locally as a guest with the Oberlin Dance Company (ODC), which first produced his original work. His off-Broadway pieces, often developed with Doug Skinner and Michael O'Connor, include *Not Quite/New York*, *The Courtroom*, and *The Regard of Flight* (seen on PBS's Great Performances). Broadway credits include his original work, *Largely New York*, which received five Tony Award nominations and won Drama Desk, Outer Critics' Circle, and New York Dance and Performance awards; *Fool Moon*; *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*; and *5-6-7-8 Dance!* New York performances also include *Waiting for Godot* with Steve Martin, Robin Williams, and F. Murray Abraham at Lincoln Center; *Texts for Nothing*, directed by Joseph Chaikin, at the Public Theater; and George Wolfe's production of *The Tempest* in Central Park. For the Roundabout Theatre Company he directed and starred in his own adaptation of Molière's *Scapin* in 1997 and directed *A Flea in Her Ear* earlier this year. He has also performed in *A Man's a Man*, *The Seagull*, and *Three Cuckolds* at the La Jolla Playhouse and has a long-standing artistic partnership with Seattle Repertory Theatre, where *Largely New York* and *Scapin* were developed. Irwin's numerous television appearances include the closing ceremonies of the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, as well as appearances on "Northern Exposure," "Saturday Night Live!" "The Tonight Show," "The Cosby Show," "3rd Rock from the Sun," HBO's "Bette Midler: Mondo Beyondo," PBS's "Great Performances 20th Anniversary Special," "Sesame Street," Mary Chapin Carpenter's video *Let Me into Your Heart*, and Bobby McFerrin's *Don't Worry, Be Happy*. His most recent feature film credits include John Turturro's *Illuminata*, *Scalpers* with Andy Garcia, the soon-to-be-released *Midsummer Night's Dream* with Michelle Pfeiffer, Kevin Kline, and Rupert Everett, and Ang Lee's upcoming *Ride with the Devil*. He has also appeared in *My Blue Heaven*, *Scenes from a Mall*, *Popeye*, *A New Life*, *Eight Men Out*, *Stepping Out*, *Hot Shots*, and *Silent Tongue*. Irwin is the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts choreographer's fellowship and a Guggenheim fellowship, and in 1984 he became the first performing artist to receive a five-year MacArthur fellowship.



DAVID SHINER made his American debut starring in Canada's renowned Cirque du Soleil and toured North America in Cirque du Soleil's *Nouvelle Experience* from 1990 through spring 1991. He and Bill Irwin first performed together onstage at Lincoln Center's Serious Fun! festival; out of that collaboration grew *Fool Moon*. American born, Shiner began his career 17 years ago on the streets of Paris, Rome, and London. He was soon starring in Europe's most prestigious circuses, including the German National and Swiss National circuses. Between circus engagements, he and his partner Rene Bazinet toured Europe in a two-man stage show. He has appeared in the feature films *Lorenzo's Oil*, *Silent Tongue*, and *Man of the House* and has made several appearances on "The Tonight Show" with Johnny Carson and Jay Leno. He currently resides in Germany.

THE RED CLAY RAMBLERS from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, have brought original and traditional string band music to concert and theatrical stages for the past 20 years. The band has appeared in more than 25 countries, recently representing the U.S. State Department on a tour of Syria, Jordan, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. The group has 12 albums to its credit, including their latest release, *Rambler*, on the Sugar Hill label.



The band has also performed and/or recorded with Shawn Colvin, Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys, Ireland's Boys of the Lough, Randy Newman, Michele Shocked, Alanis Morissette, EmmyLou Harris, and Eugene Chadbourne. The Ramblers' music has been heard on television in "Northern Exposure," "Ryan's Hope," "The Woodright Shop," "Golden Eins," "The Tonight Show," CBS's "This Morning," and ABC's "AM America." They are also frequent guests on Garrison Keillor's "Prairie Home Companion." The Ramblers created and performed the music for Sam Shepard's 1985 New York production of *A Lie of the Mind* and his feature films *Far North* and *Silent Tongue* (in which they appear with Bill Irwin and David Shiner), and perform on the soundtracks of John Sayles's *Secret of Roan Inish* and Nick Searcy's *Paradise Falls*. Works created for the theater include Jack Herrick and Tom Ziegler's *Glory Bound*; *The Merry Wives of Windsor, Texas*, written with John Haber; *Ear Rings* with Lee Smith and Don Baker; *Munci Meg* with Robin Mullins; Herrick and Bland Simpson's *Cool Spring*; *Tar Heel Voices*; and their newest show, *Kudzu: A Southern Musical*, written with Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist Doug Marlette, which recently completed a run at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. Since opening *Fool Moon* on Broadway (earning the band's second Drama Desk Award nomination for outstanding music in a play), the Ramblers have travelled with Irwin and Shiner to Los Angeles, Vienna, Munich, and back to New York. The group is currently developing *Lonestar Love* for a Broadway workshop in January 1999.

DOUGLAS STEIN (*Scenic Designer*) designed the sets for Broadway productions of *Our Town*, *Largely New York*, *Falsettos*, *Fool Moon*, *Timon of Athens*, *The Government Inspector*, *The Molière Comedies*, and *Freak*. His off-Broadway credits include *The Regard of Flight* at Lincoln Center, Bill Irwin and Mark O'Connell's adaptation of *Scapin*, *March of the Falsettos*, *Falsettoland*, and Franz Xavier Kroetz's *Through the Leaves* (for which he received an Obie Award). He has designed for major regional theaters across the country, including a ten-year association with the Guthrie Theater. His first collaboration with Irwin was Robert Woodruff's award-winning production of Bertolt Brecht's *A Man's a Man* at the La Jolla Playhouse in 1985. His opera and dance designs include *Les Enfants Terribles*, by Philip Glass and Susan Marshall, and *Black Water*, by Joyce Carol Oates and John Duffy. Stein has taught at New York University, Princeton University, and the School of Visual Arts in New York, and has served on the boards of Theatre Communications Group and Theatre for a New Audience.

BILL KELLARD (*Costume Designer*) is currently working with partner Terry Roberson on the 30th-anniversary season of Children's Television

Workshop's "Sesame Street." He recently collaborated with Bill Irwin on his production of *A Flea in Her Ear* for the Roundabout Theatre Company. He has also designed for the daytime dramas "Ryan's Hope" and "Search for Tomorrow." His theater credits include musical touring productions of *Show Boat*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Oklahoma!* and *Shenandoah*. For his work on *Fool Moon*, Kellard was nominated for an L.A. Ovation Award in 1994. For his efforts in television, he has received four Daytime Emmy Awards.

NANCY SCHERTLER (*Lighting Designer*) designed the lighting for the Broadway productions of *Fool Moon* and *Largely New York*, for which she received a Tony Award nomination. Her off-Broadway credits include *A Flea in Her Ear* and *Scapin* at the Roundabout Theatre Company, *The Brides of the Moon* and *The Secretaries* at the New York Theatre Workshop, and *Falsettoland* at Playwrights Horizons. She has designed extensively for regional theaters, including the Huntington Theatre Company, the McCarter Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, the Shakespeare Theatre, and Arena Stage, where she recently designed *Lovers and Executioners*, *Dimly Perceived Threats to the System*, and *Uncle Vanya* (directed by Zeldia Fichandler). Opera credits include *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Julius Caesar*, among others, for Wolf Trap Opera Company. Schertler is currently on the faculty at Smith College where she teaches lighting design.

TOM MORSE (*Sound Designer*) has designed the sound for more than 50 Broadway productions, including *Grease*, *Fool Moon*, *Me and My Girl*, *Artist Descending a Staircase*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Safe Sex*, *Mail*, *The Most Happy Fella*, *Duet for One*, *Doonesbury*, *Human Comedy*, *The Iceman Cometh*, *Precious Sons*, *Execution of Justice*, *Children of a Lesser God*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, and *Peter Allen: Up in One*, as well as Neil Simon's *Jake's Women*, *Lost in Yonkers*, *Rumors*, *Broadway Bound*, *Biloxi Blues*, *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *The Odd Couple*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *Little Me*, and *Fools*. In 1994 Morse won an L.A. Ovation Award for his sound design for *Fool Moon*.

FLYING BY FOY (*Flying Effects Designer*), directed by Peter and Garry Foy, is the world's largest flying effects company. In 1995 alone, the Las Vegas-based company flew more than 250 productions, including 117 productions of *Peter Pan*, 22 productions of *The Wizard of Oz*, and 93 other productions throughout the world. Peter Foy sailed from London's West End to stage flying for the 1950 Broadway production of *Peter Pan*, starring Jean Arthur and Boris Karloff. His innovative techniques also sent Mary Martin soaring in Jerome Robbins's 1954 musical version, and subsequent technical innovations soon established Foy as the standard setter of the industry. Foy remained in the U.S., established Flying by Foy, and has since worked aerial magic for feature films, theater, operas, ballets, and concerts. Credits include *Peter Pan* with Sandy Duncan and Cathy Rigby, *The Wizard of Oz* with Roseanne, *Tommy*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Lion King*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and the Academy Awards and Tony Awards presentations.

NANCY HARRINGTON (*Producing Associate/Production Stage Manager*) has been producing associate for *Fool Moon* since its original Broadway production and has served as production stage manager in all its other venues. She has worked with Bill Irwin extensively over the past 13 years as production stage manager and collaborator on a variety of film, video, and theater projects, including *The Regard of Flight*, *Largely New York*, and *Scapin*. She has also been production stage manager for more than 60 premiere productions in New York, Los Angeles, and Seattle.

IS THERE A WRITER IN THE HOUSE?

by Elizabeth Brodersen

What do these things have in common: a Broadway clown show, an ancient Greek tragedy, an Irish social drama, a contemporary British love story, an icon of 20th-century American theater, a brand-new musical, and a 17th-century French comedy? They're all part of A.C.T.'s 1998-99 season.

Finding seven plays suitable for mainstage production each year is a particularly complex process at A.C.T., with its magnificent 1000-seat Geary Theater and 20,000-strong subscription audience of diverse cultural tastes and backgrounds. At A.C.T., a company whose mission is to "conserve, renew, and reinvent its relationship to the rich theatrical traditions and literatures that are our collective legacy, while exploring new artistic forms and communities," the primary challenge is to choose work from the classic repertory that demands to be seen again and again through the centuries, as well as exciting new work that helps us appreciate those classics in new ways.

FROM THE GROUND UP

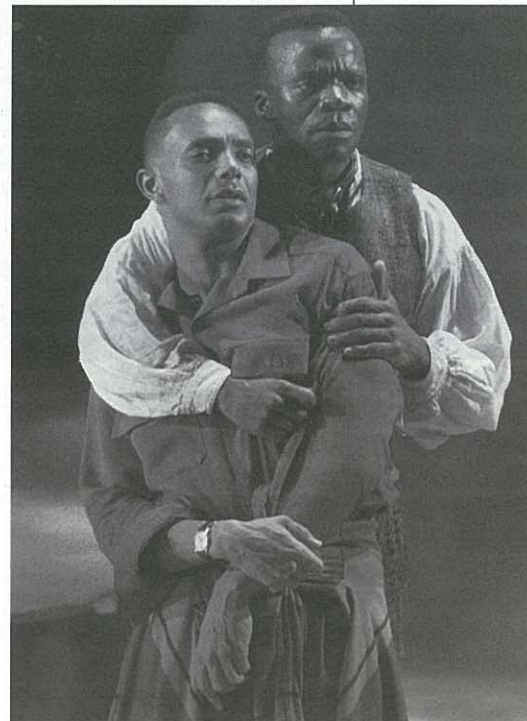
A company dedicated to nurturing the growth of American theater, A.C.T. supports the careers of promising writers on the mainstage and in the conservatory—and the playwright is always a welcome presence at A.C.T. The Young Conservatory's New Plays Program, for example, has developed a national reputation for commissioning new plays from established American playwrights like Constance Congdon, Timothy Mason, Daisy Foote, Lynne Alvarez, Brad Slight, Mary Gallagher, Jim Grimsley, Joe Pintauro, and Pulitzer Prize winner Paul Zindel, who are in residence at A.C.T. while crafting their scripts in rehearsal with young actors.

Meanwhile on the mainstage, of the 48 subscription plays produced by A.C.T. from 1992, when Artistic Director Carey Perloff assumed artistic leadership of the company, through the end of the 1998-99 season, 30 will have represented the work of living writers. Among them are such authors of "contemporary classics" as Tom Stoppard (*Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*, *Arcadia*), Harold Pinter (*Old Times*), August Wilson (*Seven Guitars*), David Storey (*Home*), and David Mamet (*Oleanna*), as well as ground-breaking new playwrights like Tony Kushner (*Angels in America*), Robert O'Hara (*Insurrection: Holding History*), Leslie Ayzajian (*Singer's Boy*), and Eric Overmyer (*Dark Rapture*). Several plays, including *Insurrection: Holding History* and *Angels in America*, came to A.C.T. in need of significant further

development despite previous productions, while three recent projects—*Seven Guitars*, *High Society* (which originated here), and *Golden Child*—were coproductions of new plays destined for Broadway that benefited from extensive rehearsal and rewriting at A.C.T. Important firsts have included the world premieres of *Singer's Boy* and this season's *First Picture Show*, by David Gordon and Ain Gordon, and the American premiere of Stoppard's new play *Indian Ink*. During the same period, A.C.T. produced 11 new translations and/or adaptations of classical works, of which five were commissioned by A.C.T. and most of which underwent significant development while in rehearsal here.

A.C.T. recognizes the advantage of having the writer involved in the development of a production. Even with a play as finished as *Old Times* (written in 1971), Perloff consulted Pinter by telephone on a regular basis, and Stoppard will pay a visit to A.C.T. during rehearsals of *Indian Ink*. With newly commissioned works, the process begins sometimes years in advance in conversations with writers, such as resident playwrights Mac Wellman and Robert O'Hara, who develop original projects in workshops in the conservatory, which increasingly serves as the research and development arm of the company.

Thanks largely to a major three-year grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation and support from the Fleishhacker Foundation, the Creative Work Fund, the National Endowment for the Arts, and Theatre Communications Group, A.C.T. has placed increasing emphasis on commissioning and developing new writing. Projects currently in development, with workshops scheduled for the coming season, include Wellman and David Lang's collaboration with the Kronos Quartet on a music/theater adaptation of an Ambrose Bierce story, *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field* (with a public workshop performance at the Center for the Arts at Yerba Buena Gardens planned for the spring); *St. Cecilia*, a new musical drama by Tony Kushner; *Bethlehem*, a powerful new play by Bay Area playwright Octavio Solis; *Some-Kind-of-A Wind-in-the-Willows*, a humorous adaptation by David Gordon of the children's classic; O'Hara's *-14: An American Maul*, the third installment in the trilogy that includes *Insurrection*; Giles Havergal's (*Travels with My Aunt*) adaptation of Edith Wharton's classic American novel *The House of Mirth*; and a new



(l to r) Gregory Wallace and L. Peter Callender in A.C.T.'s 1998 production of *Insurrection: Holding History*, by resident playwright Robert O'Hara

A.C.T. HAS
PLACED
INCREASING
EMPHASIS ON
COMMISSIONING
AND DEVELOPING
NEW WRITING.



(clockwise from upper left) Olympia Dukakis, Anne Pitoniak, Gerald Hiken, and Michele Shay in the world-premiere production of *Singer's Boy*, by Leslie Ayvazian

translation/adaptation by Michael Feingold (*Mary Stuart*) of Bertolt Brecht's *Threepenny Opera*.

"There were two reasons we started thinking with greater urgency about new work," says Perloff. "The first was that we realized that many of the students in our Advanced Training Program [ATP] had never had the opportunity to work with writers of their own time. The writer-actor collaboration is so rich and instructive; through it, young actors learn dramaturgy in its most basic sense, what it takes for a creative mind to shape a character. In the years after they graduate, these young actors will spend a great deal of time on new work. The more adept they are at dealing with the writer's creative process, the more fruitful that work will be. Thus, bringing live writers to A.C.T. to collaborate with the ATP became a high priority.

"Secondly, as we moved back into the Geary Theater, we realized that this magnificent space demands plays, like *Insurrection* and *Angels in America*, that have a certain level of muscularity and a real richness of language and metaphor that are increasingly hard to find in this era of television realism. It therefore becomes more productive to commission and develop work from the ground up, with the Geary foremost in our minds. We're not looking at an enormous volume of commissions, but at a very specific kind of writing."

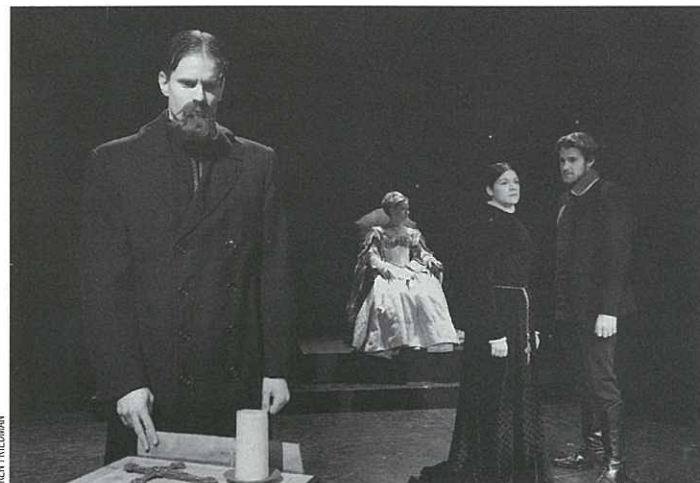
Furthermore, in keeping with the company's roots as a classical ensemble, A.C.T. is committed to preserving a rich heritage of dramatic literature for future generations through large-scale reinterpretations of the classics. Some of A.C.T.'s most significant commissions have supported the creation of new translations and/or adaptations of existing works—which require the same development resources as any other "new" writing. Perloff has become known for staging visceral

new translations of such classic plays as Strindberg's *Creditors*, translated by A.C.T. Resident Dramaturg Paul Walsh; Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*, translated and adapted by Paul Schmidt; Euripides' *Hecuba* and Sophocles' *Antigone*, vividly recreated by Timberlake Wertenbaker; and Michael Feingold's beautiful new translation of Friedrich Schiller's rarely performed *Mary Stuart*. "A classical play is not a museum piece to be exhumed," says Perloff. "One can't just trot out a text without investigating its translation or adaptation, since language is the medium by which we build a bridge between our contemporary culture and the world of the original play. This is a very complex process and one in which we are very interested."

ASSOCIATING WITH ARTISTS

To find new work for succeeding generations of actors and audiences, A.C.T. has joined an ever-expanding national network of artists. "The first draft of a play is only that—it is a blueprint for exploration," observes Perloff. "And the exploration is affected by a whole range of collaborators: actors, directors, musicians, designers, dramaturgs. That doesn't mean the voice of the writer doesn't drive the creative process. It's just that theater is a particularly collaborative art form."

Early in her tenure Perloff assembled an artistic team that includes members of the A.C.T. staff as well as selected "associate artists" including directors, designers, actors, and other professionals who have worked with A.C.T. This season Perloff has invited to the table Broadway producer Margo Lion (*Jelly's Last Jam*, *Triumph of Love*, *Angels in America*), casting director Ellen Novack, musical director Peter Maleitzke, scenic designer Loy Arcenas (*High Society*), composer Lang (*Hecuba*, *Mary Stuart*), playwright O'Hara, and director Charles Randolph-Wright (*Insurrection*). The full group meets twice each year to discuss season planning, with frequent contact throughout the season and regular meetings among members



(l to r) ATP students David Fitzgerald, Helen Cox, Terri Mowrey, and Derek Cecil in the spring 1997 studio production of *Mary Stuart*

who are in San Francisco.

Ideas for future projects also arise from interdisciplinary collaborations with Bay Area artists like shadow master Larry Reed (*The Tempest*), choreographer Margaret Jenkins (*Hecuba*), and musical groups like the Kronos Quartet (*The Tempest*), Chanticleer (*Mary Stuart*), and KITKA (*Hecuba*). "Again, we are responding to the space in which we work," says Perloff. "The Geary is beautifully suited to the performance of live music, and we are trying to explore ways to take advantage of the qualities that are unique to A.C.T. and to the Bay Area in which we work."

Some of the most exciting projects for future seasons grow out of the interaction between artists and writers during current-season production. "One of the interesting things for Robert O'Hara about doing *Insurrection* here last season, for example, was to see his play next to works by Schiller and Tennessee Williams," says Perloff. "That experience creates a different kind of muscle and ambition and excitement in a playwright." O'Hara will return this fall to work with *Hecuba* actors, many of whom were in *Insurrection*, on his new play. Randolph-Wright's experience with the cast of *Insurrection* inspired A.C.T.'s decision to revisit *Tartuffe* with many of the same actors this spring. And David Gordon's happy experience with *Shlemiel the First* led to his desire to bring the world premiere of *The First Picture Show* to A.C.T. and to the commission for *Some-Kind-of-A Wind-in-the-Willows*, which was developed with much hilarity by ATP students last spring.

One of the most important collaborators in the development of work for the A.C.T. stage is, as ever, the audience. "Producing new plays is a very ambitious process," concludes Perloff. "One of the questions that always has to be asked about a new work is whether and when it is ready for production, and one of the things we ask of an audience of new work is to be engaged in the process of bringing that work to reality. That is why we host discussions after performances of new plays. We can't do it without you." ■

Partners in Mime, continued from page 24

struggles that, when lampooned onstage, can be funny to everyone.

"Red Skelton, for example, has always made me laugh," says Shiner. "His comedy is not based on social issues, or politics, or pop culture. Every generation has its own way of communicating what is hip and what is not, what is in and what is out. Those are all passing things that come and go. It's the reality of human life that endures: our experience of fear, love, loneliness, death. Pop culture, the kind of comedy in popular magazines or on television, plays to a narrower audience and just doesn't last that long. Clowns go beyond that, make us feel the depth of the human condition. So we're always funny." ■



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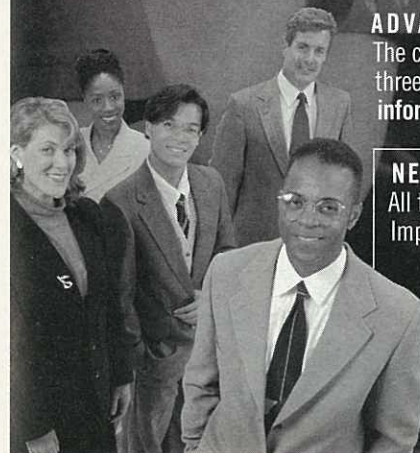
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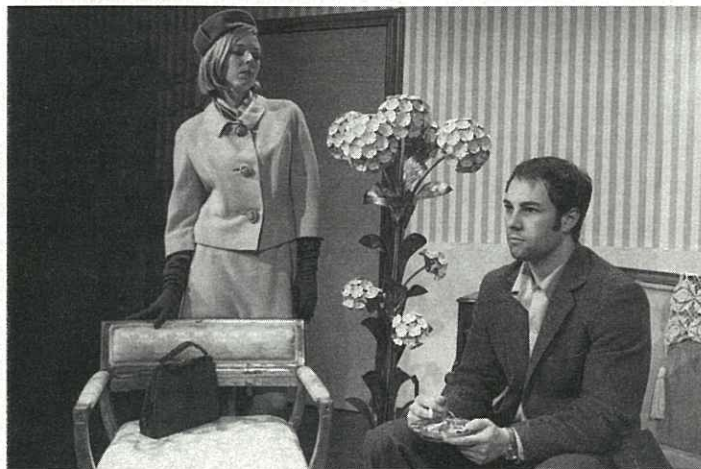
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Share your love of literature
with San Francisco's children!

During the run of *Fool Moon*, A.C.T. joins forces with Reach Out and Read, the San Francisco General Hospital Foundation's early literacy project. All *Fool Moon* audience members are encouraged to bring children's books, appropriate for ages six months to five years, to the Geary Theater (where collection bins are located in the front lobby) which will be distributed to children receiving pediatric care at SF General. Each patron who donates a book will receive a free *Fool Moon* poster (11" x 17"), compliments of Anderson/Graphic Arts Center.

Designed by pediatricians and educators to combat illiteracy and teach parents the value of early reading to their children, Reach Out and Read targets children aged six months to five years who are visiting SF General's Children's Health Center, the primary care giver for thousands of San Francisco children. Project volunteers read to children and their siblings in the waiting room, doctors use books during pediatric appointments, and every child is given a culturally and age-appropriate book to take home after his or her visit. Reach Out and Read aims to provide every child who receives primary care at the Children's Health Center with a private library of ten books by the time he or she enters kindergarten. The project—based on research which demonstrates that children's later literacy depends on reading to them during the years *before* they enter school—has already proved successful in other urban hospitals.

SF General is the principal health care provider for ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged children in San Francisco, and Reach Out and Read has the potential to reach low-income families nearly 15,000 times each year, so they need all the books they can get! For more information on Reach Out and Read, please call (415) 206-4478.



KEN FRIEDMAN

M.F.A. candidates
Traci Shannon and
Timothy Hull in Harold
Pinter's *Collection* at
New Langton Arts

A.C.T. MASTER OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM PRESENTS *RAISED IN CAPTIVITY* AT THE MAGIC THEATRE

This October, M.F.A. candidates in the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program (ATP) present 12 performances of Nicky Silver's *Raised in Captivity* at San Francisco's Magic Theatre. Director Timothy Douglas (who recently staged *Valley Song* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and joins the ATP core faculty this season) directs the cast of five ATP graduates. Silver's poignant 1995 comedy explores the absurd, tragic, yet often amusing legacy of family dysfunction. "This play speaks eloquently to the many ways we are all taken captive by events in our lives," says Conservatory Director Melissa Smith, "until we find the courage to break free of the bonds of the past and move on."

Raised in Captivity is the fourth public production of A.C.T.'s expanded Master of Fine Arts Program. Formerly a two-year certificate program (with the option of earning an M.F.A.), the ATP was expanded in 1996 to include a mandatory third year of study emphasizing public performance in venues throughout San Francisco and culminating in the award of the advanced degree. The ATP expansion—made possible by a generous grant from The James Irvine Foundation—was inaugurated with a public production of Lynne Alvarez's *Reincarnation of Jaimie Brown* at New College, followed by successful productions of Caryl Churchill and David Lan's *Mouthful of Birds* and Harold Pinter's *Lover* and *The Collection* at New Langton Arts. A.C.T.'s M.F.A. productions have become increasingly popular among a growing local audience enthusiastic for adventurous contemporary work. By the year 2000, the A.C.T. Conservatory plans to present at least four public productions each season.

Raised in Captivity is performed at the Magic Theatre, located in Building D at Fort Mason Center, October 2-17. All performances are open to the public; tickets are available for \$10 (\$8 for students, full-time teachers, and seniors with valid ID). For tickets and more information, please call (415) 439-2ACT.

KICKING OFF ANOTHER EXCITING ACT 1 SEASON

ACT 1 is off and running for its fourth consecutive season, with another outstanding lineup of A.C.T. plays and special events. A social and educational affiliate of A.C.T., ACT 1 is closely involved in A.C.T. through education, special events, volunteer work, and fundraising. Formed in 1995 by A.C.T. Trustee Julie Stein to generate interest in live theater among young, professional Bay Area residents, ACT 1 has become a vital part of the A.C.T. family.



KEN FRIEDMAN

Tessa Zugmeyer and
Dileep Rao in Pinter's
Lover

ACT 1 members may subscribe to a package of three designated plays, which this season includes *Fool Moon*, the American premiere of Tom Stoppard's *Indian Ink*, and the world-premiere musical *The First Picture Show*, written and directed by David Gordon (*Shlemiel the First*) and Ain Gordon. Members are invited to attend private cocktail receptions at elegant Union Square restaurants before each performance in the ACT 1 subscription series. ACT 1 also sponsors special events to raise much-appreciated funding for the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program—including the annual *Comedy Night at the Geary*, an evening of laughs featuring nationally recognized comedians scheduled this season to appear March 24, 1999.

ACT 1 members who subscribe to the three-play ACT 1 series receive a host of benefits, including priority seating when purchasing tickets to A.C.T. performances; discounts on extra tickets for guests and to A.C.T. plays not included in the ACT 1 regular subscription series; a free subscription to *Preview*, A.C.T.'s informative newsletter; significant discounts at more than a dozen Union Square restaurants and retailers; and a discount on tickets to *Comedy Night at the Geary*.

Membership in ACT 1 is \$50 per person or \$85 per couple. If you are already an A.C.T. subscriber and want to join ACT 1, you can easily reschedule your performance dates to the ACT 1 subscription dates by calling the A.C.T. Box Office at (415) 749-2ACT.

To get in the act with ACT 1, please call ACT 1 President Elizabeth Sennett at (415) 536-8548.

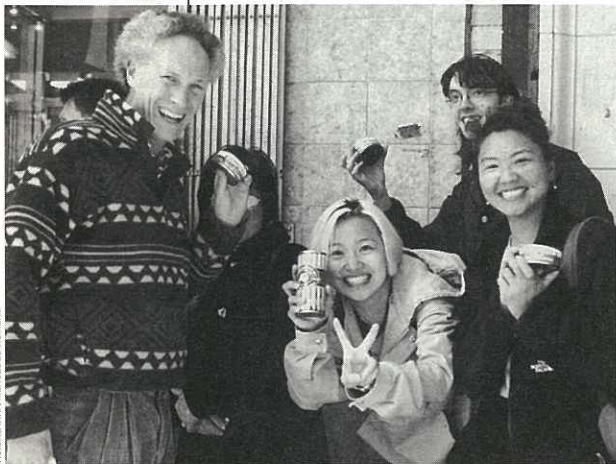
PAY WHAT YOU WISH UPDATE

A.C.T.'s Pay What You Wish/Bring What You Can program—which allows patrons who are unable to afford full ticket prices to pay for selected performance tickets on a sliding scale, in exchange for food donations to Project Open Hand—enjoyed unprecedented success during the 1997-98 season. More than 1,200 people attended Pay

What You Wish performances, averaging 160 sliding-scale patrons per production.

Tickets for Pay What You Wish performances go on sale at the Geary Theater Box Office at 6 p.m. on the day of the show and must be purchased with cash. The program continues into the current season as part of A.C.T.'s efforts to introduce as many people as possible to the joys of great theater.

A.C.T. Pay What You Wish patrons bring what they can to support Project Open Hand at a performance of The Guardsman.

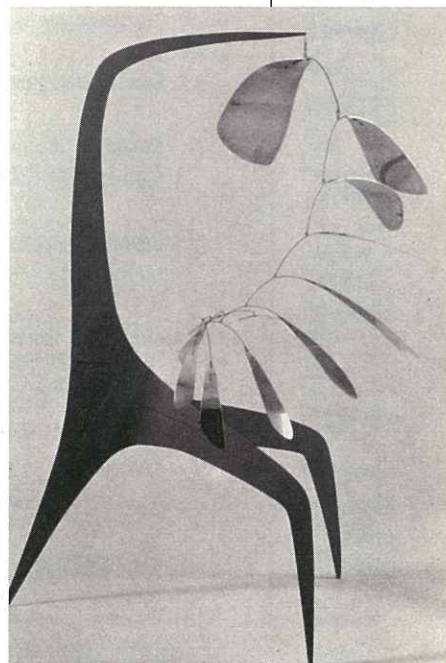


VISION/ANNA/MERCEDES ROMERO

A.C.T. SALUTES SFMOMA'S ALEXANDER CALDER EXHIBITION

A.C.T. would like to salute our neighbor in the arts, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, which currently hosts the only West Coast engagement of "Alexander Calder: 1898-1976." Calder's graceful sculptures are widely recognized as masterpieces of 20th-century modernism. This fall (September 4-December 1, 1998), SFMOMA is proud to commemorate the centenary of Calder's birth with an exhibition that originated at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., featuring approximately 250 works. The pieces on view, some of which have never before been on public display, range from minute wire sculptures to monumental stabiles and mobiles. The exhibition is a delightful, colorful experience for all ages—and children under 12 are always admitted free to the museum.

SFMOMA is located at 151 Third Street. Please call (415) 357-4000 for hours and exhibition information. For information about SFMOMA's popular school and youth programs, call (415) 357-4097.



Aluminum Leaves, Red Post (1941), by Alexander Calder

HEWLETT PACKARD GIVES A.C.T. THE WORKS

A.C.T. received wonderful news from Hewlett Packard this summer when HP awarded A.C.T. a generous equipment gift to upgrade the theater's computer system. The donation of a new HP 300 mini mainframe computer will greatly enhance the efficiency of A.C.T.'s ticketing and fundraising efforts.

HP is committed to serving as an economic, intellectual, and social asset in each nation and community in which it operates. The company's more than 25,000 products include computers and peripheral products, electronic test and measurement instruments and systems, networking products, medical electronic equipment, instruments and systems for chemical analysis, hand-held calculators, and electronic components.

The company's tradition of philanthropy and community involvement began in 1939, HP's first year in business, when cofounders Bill Hewlett and David Packard gave a five-dollar donation to a local charity in Palo Alto, California. Today HP is among the world's most generous corporate citizens. In 1997, HP donated more than \$61 million in cash and equipment worldwide. In the arts, HP focuses on improving the productivity of arts organizations by donating HP computer equipment. ■

WAYS OF GIVING

TAKE STOCK IN A.C.T.

There are many creative ways to give to A.C.T. All are tax deductible, but recent increases in stock and mutual fund prices also offer A.C.T. donors a tremendous opportunity to:

Avoid capital gains taxes on the sale of appreciated stock;

Create an income-tax deduction equal to the fair-market value of the stock at the time of transfer; and

Generate a more significant gift than if you were just writing a check.

Additional ways to contribute to A.C.T.'s success include:

Cash—one of the most familiar ways to give;

Property—most real estate and personal property qualify as tax-deductible charitable gifts; and

Life insurance—the cash value of your current paid-up life insurance policy can benefit A.C.T.

PLANNED GIVING

Many people who could not otherwise contribute to A.C.T. as generously as they would like find they are able to do so with a carefully planned gift. You can make a valuable long-term contribution to great theater by:

Making a bequest to A.C.T.—please let us know if you have included A.C.T. in your will or estate plans; or

Creating a life-income charitable trust with A.C.T.—you can gain an immediate and substantial tax deduction, increased annual income paid to you for life, freedom from investment worries, and avoidance of capital gains taxes when you transfer appreciated property to a charitable remainder trust.

To find out more about ways to give to A.C.T., please contact:

A.C.T. Development Director John D. Loder
30 Grant Avenue
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American Conservatory Theater is deeply grateful for the generous support of the many individuals, corporations, foundations, and government agencies whose contributions make great theater possible. The list below reflects gifts received between June 1, 1997, and July 10, 1998.

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A.C.T.'s administrative and conservatory offices are located at 30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108, (415) 834-3200. On the Web: www.aact-sfbay.org.

BOX OFFICE AND TICKET INFORMATION

Geary Theater Box Office

Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the Geary Theater, one block west of Union Square. Box office hours are 12 to 8 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 12 to 6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During non-performance weeks, business hours are 12 to 6 p.m. daily.

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Tickets are also available at BASS centers, including The Warehouse and Tower Records/Video.

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Ticket prices range from \$11 to \$55.

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Half-price tickets are sometimes available on the day of performance at TIX on Union Square. Half-price student and senior rush tickets are available at the Geary Theater Box Office 90 minutes before curtain. Matinee senior rush tickets are available at noon on the day of the performance for \$10. All rush tickets are subject to availability, one ticket per valid ID.

Student subscriptions are also available at half price. Senior citizen discounts are available for full-season and sampler series subscriptions. A.C.T. also offers one Pay What You Wish performance during the regular run of each production; patrons are allowed to pay any amount for tickets when they bring in a donation of canned food for Project Open Hand.

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For groups of 15 or more, call Linda Graham, Group Services, at (415) 346-7805.

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For information on A.C.T. Prologues, Audience Exchanges, A.C.T. Perspectives symposia, and *Words on Plays* audience handbooks, please turn to the "A.C.T. Extras" page of this program.

Student Matinees

Matinees are offered at 1 p.m. to elementary, secondary, and college school groups for selected productions. Tickets are specially priced at \$10. For information call (415) 439-2383.

Conservatory

A.C.T. offers classes, training, and advanced study in a wide range of theater disciplines. The Advanced Training Program offers a rigorous three-year course of actor training, culminating in a master of fine arts degree. The Summer Training Congress is an intensive program for those with some performing arts background. Studio A.C.T. offers evening and weekend classes, including new Corporate Education Services, to theater enthusiasts at every level of background and training. The Young Conservatory is a broad-based program for students between the ages of 8 and 18. Call (415) 439-2350 for a free brochure.

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More than 10,000 collection of costumes, ranging from handmade period garments to modern sportswear, is available for rental by schools, theaters, production companies, and individuals. For information call (415) 439-2379.

Parking

A.C.T. patrons can park for just \$8 at the San Francisco Hilton and Towers for up to five hours, subject to availability. Enter on Ellis Street between Mason and Taylor. Show your ticket stub for that day's performance upon exit to receive the special price. After five hours, the regular rate applies.

A.C.T./FYI.

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AT THE THEATER

The Geary Theater is located at 415 Geary Street. The auditorium opens 30 minutes before curtain.

A.C.T. Merchandise

Posters, sweatshirts, t-shirts, nightshirts, mugs, note cards, scripts, and *Words on Plays* are available for purchase in the main lobby and at the Geary Theater Box Office.

Refreshments

Bar service is available one hour before the performance in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower lobby level and in the Sky Lobby on the second balcony level. Reservations for refreshments to be served at intermission may also be made, at either bar or in the main lobby, during the hour before performance. Food and drink are not permitted in the auditorium.

Beepers!

If you carry a pager, beeper, cellular phone, or watch with alarm, please make sure that it is set to the "off" position while you are in the theater. Or you may leave it and your seat number with the house manager, so you can be notified if you are called.

Emergency Telephone

Leave your seat location with those who may need to reach you and have them call (415) 439-2396 in an emergency.

Latecomers

A.C.T. performances begin on time. Latecomers will be seated before the first intermission only if there is an appropriate interval.

Listening Systems

Headsets designed to provide clear, amplified sound anywhere in the auditorium are available free of charge in the lobby before performance. Please turn off your hearing aid when using an A.C.T. headset, as it will react to the sound system and make a disruptive noise.

Photographs and recordings of A.C.T. performances are strictly forbidden.

Rest rooms are located in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower lobby level, the Balcony Lobby, and the Garret on the uppermost lobby level.



Wheelchair seating is available on all levels of the Geary Theater. Please call (415) 749-2ACT in advance to notify the house staff of any special needs.

AFFILIATIONS

A.C.T. operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theaters and Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

A.C.T. is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the nonprofit professional theater. A.C.T. is a member of the League of Resident Theaters, Theatre Bay Area, Union Square Association, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau.

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The director is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union.

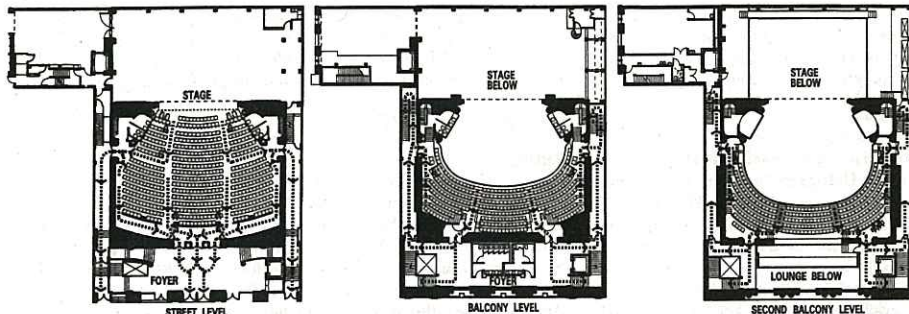


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